

'Keeping House' Where You Work

Most of you probably have had to help with the house cleaning chores at some time or another, so I'm sure you all agree that good housekeeping practices are important in the home.

However, we sometimes overlook the fact that good housekeeping is a key duty on the job, too. The orderly arrangement of work areas is vital to the safety of all workers, regardless of whether they are involved with machines and tools or with appliances and furniture.

Falls often result from tripping over loose articles such as tools left in aiseways and work areas. Wet spots on the floor or trash and other articles left in stairways also take their toll.

During periods of rain and snow, you know what a nuisance it is when the kids track water into the house from outside. Well, you'll probably hear me yell loudly if you do that here, too.

Wet spots cause slips and falls. They should be cleaned up as soon as possible, regardless of who was responsible for the mess. The company has placed trash receptacles in several strategic areas, so there is no excuse for waste paper, pop bottles, or other materials being thrown on the floor. And you'd better get in close for a sure shot at the trash barrel, unless you've recently been contacted by an NFL or NBA scout.

A word of caution—if a bottle smashes on the floor, don't attempt to pick up the glass with your bare hands. Wear gloves, or sweep up the pieces. Use the same procedure for cleaning up nails and other sharp objects.

Let's face it, your job is much easier to do when your work area is kept neat. Keep your tools and equipment off the floor and stored in the proper places. This not only reduces tripping hazards but also protects the equipment you use to earn a living.

Did you ever go to the closet at home to get your umbrella and have to pull it out from under some other articles? Things start falling all over and you begin to lose your cool. Maybe you have a tendency to swear at those inanimate falling objects as though the mess is their fault. But who was it that left stuff piled on top of the umbrella when in a hurry to dig something else out of the closet?

The same principles apply when storing materials or equipment on the job. Take time to make the stacks neat—and not too high. If possible, keep the little-used items at the back or bottom, leaving articles that are needed most often readily accessible.

Just as a quarterback has to keep his eyes open for changes in the defense or certain other tell-tale moves of opposing players we need to keep a lookout for danger signals on the job in order to keep "our team" safe and successful. These danger signals include evidence of poor housekeeping—a spill, a tear in the carpet, articles projecting from a

shelf, wires across a walkway, etc. These things must be corrected immediately, so if you can't do so yourself, let me know so I can see that it's taken care of.

In closing, I'd like to emphasize that we're all dependent on each other for safety. It's up to each of us to hold up our end of the deal. When each of us keeps his own area in order, the whole plant is a safer place in which to work.

